

**REMARKS**

Applicants again wish to extend their appreciation for Examiner Dunwoody's time and consideration provided during the telephonic interview on April 20, 2004, which was summarized in the Examiner's Interview Summary form having a mail date of April 22, 2004 as indicated on the PTO-90C cover page for the Interview Summary form. The interview date indicated in the Interview Summary form, however, should read April 20, 2004; the April 30, 2004 date appears to be a typographical error.

During the interview, the rejections of claims 1, 7, 13, 19, 27 and 32 based on Silverman, et al. (U.S. 3,290,770), Joslin (U.S. 3,208,136) and Beyer (U.S. 2,693,378) in the Office Action dated January 7, 2004 were discussed. The undersigned submitted that the claims distinguished over these references for reasons set forth in Applicants' Amendment filed on October 3, 2003, but no agreement was reached as indicated in the Examiner's Interview Summary form. The undersigned proposed amending claim 1 to include that whereby upon sliding the female end over the male end, the flexible seal and locking mechanism expands into the first bead to form both a seal and a mechanical lock. The Examiner indicated that such an amendment may distinguish the claim over the cited references and that the claims should be amended to overcome the references of record as noted the Examiner Interview Summary form.

Applicants amended claim 1 to recite in-part "whereby upon sliding said female end over said male end to where said flexible seal and locking mechanism is aligned with said first bead, said flexible seal and locking mechanism expands into said first bead to form both a seal and a mechanical lock" and the Examiner withdrew the rejections of claim 1 based on Silverman and Joslin.

Newly cited Bille (U.S. 1,608,197) also does not anticipate claim 1. Bille simply does not disclose or suggest structure whereby upon sliding said female end over said male end to where said flexible seal and locking mechanism is aligned with said first bead, said flexible seal and locking mechanism expands into said first bead to form both a seal and a mechanical lock as advanced in the Amendment submitted on November 9, 2004. Accordingly, Applicants resubmit the request for withdrawal of all of the rejections based on Bille taken alone or in combination

with Ahlrot (U.S. 3,955,834). Applicants further request the issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date.

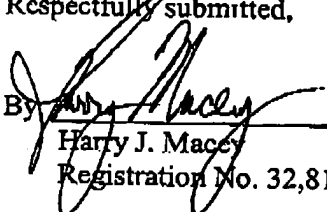
During a telephone conversation between Examiner Dunwoody and the undersigned on November 17, 2004, the undersigned proposed submitting the foregoing interview summary supplement in a supplemental amendment and the Examiner agreed that it would be considered timely filed. If, however, the Examiner deems this paper not timely filed, immediate notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and/or the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 50-1947 referencing Attorney Docket No. PEG-2001CP1.

Respectfully submitted,

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